

System and Method for Tracking Environmental Emission Reductions

Cross-Reference to Related Applications

[0001] This U.S. Application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Applications having Serial Numbers 60/429,267 filed November 26, 2002 for "Environmental Emissions Management System and Method," 60/440,069 filed January 13, 2003 for "Environmental Emissions Management System and Method," 60/498,992 filed August 29, 2003 for "System and Method for Creating Emission Credit Serial Numbers and Enabling Data Transparency", 60/513,498 filed October 22, 2003 for "System and Method of Creating, Aggregating, and Transferring Agriculturally-Sourced Environmental Emission Reduction Credits," and U.S. Utility Patent Application filed of even date, November 24, 2003 for "System and Method of Creating, Aggregating, and Transferring Environmental Emission Reductions," the disclosures of which are hereby incorporated herein by reference.

Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates to environmental emissions, and in particular to tracking the environmental performance of a producer of environmental emission reductions.

Background

[0003] Environmental emissions are the subject of increasing scrutiny in many industries and municipalities, and are becoming regulated at both the regional and national level. To an increasing extent, business site permits are being used to augment regional policies by requiring pollutant mitigation for air, water, and/or soil.

[0004] Policy makers face a seemingly insurmountable dilemma: continuing economic growth/recovery requires expanded energy production and economic output, which leads directly to increased environmental emissions levels – but environmentalists are clamoring for definitive actions to reduce environmental emissions and for a greener

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0041] Embodiments of the invention are described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

[0042] FIG. 1 is a diagrammatical illustration of a system embodiment including data center services and applications operable with a data capture application;

[0043] FIGS. 2A and 2B include a flow diagram illustrating one embodiment of information flow within the system, including registration and reporting, herein described by way of example;

[0044] FIG. 3 is a flow diagram illustrating a site assessment process in keeping with the teachings of the present invention;

[0045] FIG. 4 is a diagrammatical illustrating of component parts of an emission reductions serial number, by way of example;

[0046] FIGS. 5A - 5C illustrate interactions between the data center and the data capture application, wherein FIG. 5A illustrates an engagement results delivery process, FIG. 5B illustrates an engagement data retrieval process, and FIG. 5C illustrates a global and status data retrieval process;

[0047] FIG. 6 is a flow diagram illustrating a process embodiment for eligibility and data testing;

[0048] FIG. 7 is a flow diagram illustrating a process embodiment for a unit creation and allocation process;

[0049] FIG. 8 is a flow diagram illustrating a process embodiment for creating emission reductions serial numbers;

[0050] FIG. 9 depicts an exemplary emission reductions certificate with serial numbers;

[0051] FIGS. 10-12 include flow diagrams illustrating inventory, search and registry, and sale process flows, respectively, for the system herein described by way of example; and

[0052] FIG. 13 is a flow diagram illustrating a process embodiment for using emission reductions serial numbers.

Detailed Description

[0053] The present invention will now be described more fully hereinafter with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which embodiments of the invention are shown, by way of example. This invention may, however, be embodied in many different forms and should not be construed as limited to the embodiments set forth herein. Rather, these embodiments are provided so that this disclosure will be thorough and complete, and will fully convey the scope of the invention to those skilled in the art. Like numbers refer to like elements throughout.

[0054] Referring initially to FIG. 1, embodiments of the present invention will provide a system 100 for tracking environmental performance of a producer of environmental emissions and of associating individual environmental emission reductions to their producer and/or to a variety of collected data 10. As illustrated with reference to FIG. 1, system 100 is comprised of various data 10, applications, and modules including data center services and applications and a data capture application, including connectivity between them. The exemplary graphic depicts services embodied both within the data center 70 and the data capture device 80.

[0055] FIG. 2A and 2B, illustrate, by way of example, system level data and data flow interactions between collected data 10 and various function modules including customer relationship management, auditing 20, processing/conversion 30, registration 40, reporting 60, accounting, various product modules, and customer inquiries.

[0056] Such a system 100 complements the use of sound foundational science used to qualify and quantify environmental emission reductions and removals, and provides means to associate registered producer environmental emission reductions with data 10 used to qualify and quantify the environmental emission reductions, to ascertain a producer's production practice baseline (of value when governance bodies are considering baseline policy changes), and for qualified entities - such as third party verifiers - to access all pertinent information relating to the qualification and quantification of the environmental emission reductions including data 10 that may have been optionally encrypted. It also provides means for prospective customers or buyers 74 as will hereafter be identified by way of example, to identify and/or reserve environmental emission reductions meeting specific sort criteria, to reconcile emitter